

Delaware and Raritan Canal Lock
On the Raritan River between George
and Hamilton Streets (near Johnson
and Johnson factory)
New Brunswick
Middlesex County
New Jersey

HABS No. NJ-713

HABS
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12-NEBRJ
13-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

DELAWARE AND RARITAN CANAL LOCK

HABS
NJ

Address: On the Raritan River between George and Hamilton Streets (near Johnson and Johnson factory), New Brunswick, Middlesex County, New Jersey. 12-NEBRU
13-

Present Owner: State of New Jersey.

Present Use: Not in use.

Brief Statement of Significance: This lock is a relic of the unused Delaware and Raritan Canal, an important section of a nineteenth century trade route between New York and Philadelphia.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners: Construction of the Delaware and Raritan Canal was largely financed by a group of Princeton men. Soon after the Canal was completed in 1834, ownership passed to the Camden and Amboy Railroad. In 1871 the Pennsylvania Railroad leased the Camden and Amboy Railroad including the Canal. About 1940 the Pennsylvania Railroad surrendered the Canal to the State of New Jersey.
2. Date of erection: The Delaware and Raritan Canal was chartered in 1830, and completed between Bordentown, New Jersey and New Brunswick, New Jersey in 1834.
3. Sources of information: Federal Writers' Project, New Jersey, A Guide to its Present and Past (New York: Hastings House, 1946), passim.

- B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure: Both the Delaware and Raritan Canal, and the Camden and Amboy Railroad were largely financed by Princeton men interested in keeping New York-Philadelphia traffic out of the town of Princeton. The canal and the railroad paralleled each other by-passing Princeton. After ownership of the canal passed to the railroad, separate operation was continued, but the combined company had a monopoly on the traffic between New York and Philadelphia. Passenger traffic was assigned to the railroad and freight traffic to the canal. The original prosperity of the canal rested on the coal trade with the Schuylkill Navigation System. At the height of its prosperity canal traffic was as high as 115 barges per day. This coal trade had declined by 1865 due to floods on the Schuylkill Navigation System, mismanagement, and railroad

competition. The Pennsylvania Railroad took over the canal in 1871 and refused to accept the coal hauled by the Schuylkill Navigation System because it was owned by the rival Reading Railroad. This amounted to a loss of 1,000,000 tons of freight per year, and nearly closed the canal. Nominal operation of the Delaware and Raritan Canal continued until 1933.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

- A. General Statement: The lock, typical of canal construction of the period, is made of large blocks of cut stone laid in a random coursed ashlar.

The lock is situated along the southwest bank of the Raritan River with the tow path between the canal and the river. The lock is watered, but in poor condition with the gates missing.

Prepared by Osmund R. Overby, Architect
National Park Service
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